

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 3-12 are now pending in the application, with Claim 6 being independent. Claims 1 and 13 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his indication that Claims 6-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, Applicants have amended Claim 6 into independent form. Accordingly, independent Claim 6 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Dependent Claims 3-5, 11 and 12 have been amended to depend from Claim 6 and are believed to be allowable along with dependent Claims 7-10.

The Office Action set forth rejections of Claims 1, 3-5 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Claims 1 and 13 have been cancelled, and the remaining claims are believed to be in condition for allowance for the reasons noted above. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance. In particular, it is Applicants' current intention to file a divisional application to pursue the subject matter of the rejected claims.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by Claims 3-12.

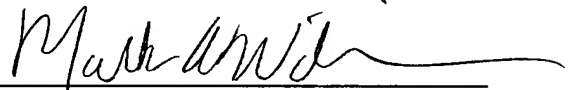
This Amendment After Final Rejection does not raise new issues, is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to

clearly place this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark A. Williamson', is written over a horizontal line.

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